

Vacancy Announcement Number: EPA – Exec – 2017 - 0004  
Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
February 15, 2016

Application of:

## **Qualification Highlights**

- Served in multiple senior leadership positions in the Federal government for 10 years and over 20 years in supervision
- Senior leadership in protecting groundwater in California from poorly regulated oil production activities
- Region 9 Water program leader for Gold King Mine Spill response and follow-on multi-jurisdictional collaboration efforts in the San Juan River Basin
- Directed financial overhaul of State Revolving Loan Fund programs in California and Hawaii resulting in over \$400 million in reduced unliquidated funds
- Lead Federal and State partnership effort to address drought impacted Tribal Drinking Water systems including identification of \$3 million in targeted funding
- Streamlined hazardous waste site cleanup through innovative collaboration between government and the private sector
- Ran robust performance oversight of primacy agencies regulating over 10,000 drinking water systems
- Issued over \$300 million annually in infrastructure funding to States, Tribes, Pacific Islands and Border Communities

## **MANAGEMENT POSITIONS**

**Assistant Director, GS-15  
Water Division, US EPA Region 9, San Francisco**

**February 2014 - Present**

Managed a 50-person organizational unit in the oversight of Arizona, Nevada, California, Hawaii and Pacific Island programs implementing the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) and State Water Infrastructure programs. Lead the direct implementation of the Safe Drinking Water Act for Tribal lands, Border Infrastructure, Tribal Infrastructure, Pacific Island Infrastructure and Tribal Clean Water Act programs. More specifically, guided SDWA compliance assistance, sanitary surveys, reporting, rule adoption, operator and lab certification programs, capacity development, source water protection and coordination with the drinking water infrastructure programs. Also under the SDWA, I directed implementation and oversight of State and Tribal Underground Injection Control (UIC) programs. I managed issuance of UIC deep well permits and tracked reporting and compliance under existing permits. I also instructed oversight of the Drinking Water and Clean Water infrastructure loan programs under the SDWA and CWA, for four States. My oversight of the States includes monitoring progress in funds utilization, work with staff and management on annual approval of State plans for the use of funds, testing of funds transactions for fiscal accountability and compliance with cross-cutting requirements such as NEPA and NHPA. I also monitored performance of the Pacific Island Utilities, US/Mexico Border Environmental Cooperation Commission and the North American Development Bank and the Indian Health Service in the direct implementation of infrastructure projects. Lastly, I administered Tribal efforts under the Clean Water Act (CWA) which are carried out through over 131 federal grant and determined if Tribes get approved to implement important aspects of the CWA including Water Quality Standards, Water Quality Monitoring and non-point source pollution projects.

- Led efforts to return CA Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program to compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act

- Directed cross-regional Tribal drought response efforts for 109 federally recognized Tribes, including messaging to Tribal Leadership, State and Federal partners and resulting in the redirection of \$3 million in highly targeted funding.
- Accomplished direct regulatory program measures through issuance of 3 UIC permits and compliance monitoring for over 15.
- Monitored financial and environmental compliance for projects and directed efforts to reduce California and Hawaii drinking water revolving loan fund unliquidated federal funds
- Initiated efforts for address the non-compliance of drinking water systems in small and disadvantaged communities by enhanced oversight of California and Arizona programs
- Acting Water Division Director from July 2015 – October 2016
- Appointed as expert witness by the US Department of Justice for the Lava Cap Superfund Site litigation team

**Assistant Director, GS-15  
Superfund Division, US EPA Region 9, San Francisco**

**2007-January 2014**

Managed a 54 person organizational unit in implementing the cleanup of over 60 Superfund sites, conducted cost recovery operations, enforced federal facility agreements and provided Division wide technical support. Established and monitored annual performance commitments consistent with national, regional and divisional priorities, policies and guidance. Managed financial outlays of over \$20 million annually consistent with agency goals and priorities. Coordinated implementation of hazardous waste site cleanup projects with local, tribal and state governments, federal agencies, community representatives and other stakeholders to ensure that the stakeholders' interests are considered in project implementation. Regularly communicated the EPA's goals and progress to Congressional and local elected officials, the media and communities

- Provided National leadership on implementation of greener cleanups to reduce environmental impact of hazardous waste site remediation
- Developed and implemented enforcement strategies at dozens of Superfund sites resulting in the implementation of over \$500 million in cleanup work by responsible parties and others, including resolution of the Rio Tinto and Asarco settlements.
- Led staff in completing early transfer of over 2,000 acres of closed military facilities listed on the NPL.
- Led the Regional Superfund program in consistently meeting annual national performance measures tied to the Regional budget, ensuring the program receives the full budget allocation
- Successful extension of a critical large program contract as part of multi-year contract strategy
- Led effort to characterize the Santa Susanna Field Lab using ARA funds
- Initiated the Regional program in developing innovative approaches to address Marine Debris
- Directed the effort to cleanup lead contaminated residential soils which were posing an imminent risk to the community in Eureka, Nevada

**Section Chief, GS-14  
Superfund Division, US EPA, Region 9, San Francisco**

**2003-2006**

Supervised 8-10 project managers on all aspects of their site cleanup work including strategic planning, technical, enforcement, and community and stakeholder involvement. Coordinated regularly with counterparts at other federal, State and local agencies and stakeholders to resolve project issues. Implemented personnel management responsibilities including hiring, conducting performance reviews and overseeing staff development and performance improvement. Performed financial management duties including budgeting, and supervising staff on grant and contract management.



- Identified and developed multi-year strategy for addressing Abandoned Uranium Mines which posed risk to rural communities
- Negotiated first site listing in 10 years and first Superfund Alternative Site resulting in significant risk and exposure reduction for two small Arizona towns
- Developed and implemented enforcement strategies and collaborated with stakeholders at over a dozen Superfund sites resulting in the implementation of over \$100 million of cleanup work by responsible parties and others.

**US/Mexico Border Team Leader, GS-14**  
**Water Division, US EPA Region 9, San Francisco**

**1999-2003**

Managed all aspects of the Regional Border Program. Lead U.S. negotiator for Border 2012, ten year border plan.

- Successfully negotiated US/Mexico Border 2012 binational agreement which expanded State roles and recognition for Tribes resulting in a Gold Medal for the Border team following the first year of implementation
- Initiated re-organization of the Border Team to reflect the needs of the new Border Plan

**Section Chief, GS-14**  
**Superfund Division, US EPA, Region 9, San Francisco**

**1995-1999**

(See above)

- Led negotiations for Montrose settlements including largest CERCLA Natural Resources in the U.S. and private residential "buyout" of residential properties adjacent to Del Amo Site
- Successfully utilized drinking water enforcement authority to address emerging contaminants at Tucson Airport Superfund Site

## **EXECUTIVE CORE QUALIFICATIONS**

### **LEADING CHANGE**

As the Assistant Director with responsibility for Tribal drinking water systems in Region 9, I directed the formulation and deployment of a strategy which prevented numerous Tribal drinking water systems from running out of water. On January 17, 2014, with California entering a third year of drought, Governor Brown declared a drought emergency. As of the end of the State water year on September 30, 2014, the State had experienced the three driest consecutive years in 119 years of recordkeeping. By January 2015, 12 systems representing more than 10% of the federally-recognized tribes in California, had very low water supplies. Seven of these tribes issued drought emergency proclamations enacting emergency authorities, underscoring the severity of the problem and the impact on the health and welfare of their communities.

- I launched regular coordination meetings with the California Area Indian Health Service to determine the severity of drought impacts to tribal communities, evaluated current and potential impacts on tribal drinking water systems and instructed a team of staff in the development of a "Drought Emergency Handbook for Tribes".

- Leading, I worked across Region 9 to develop the novel use of EPA's General Assistance Program (GAP) to assist Tribes with drought planning and conservation activities which quickly provided

\$175,000 to eight Tribes to develop Drought Contingency Plans and water conservation programs, perform water audits, design leak detection programs and conduct community outreach.

- I directed staff to modify selection criteria to prioritize drinking water infrastructure funding in FY2015 and FY2016, reprogramed unspent clean water infrastructure funds and de-obligated unspent funds for systems; resulting in \$3 million targeted for tribal systems with severely limited supplies of safe, drinkable water.
- Partnered with the State led California Drought Task Force to facilitate the rare use of California's Office of Emergency Services funding to provide emergency water supplies to the Yurok Tribe when one of its drinking water systems went dry.
- I briefed executive leadership at EPA, IHS and Congressional delegations on our actions.

## **LEADING PEOPLE**

Military base closures can have negative impacts on the economies of communities during their transition to private ownership and reuse. In California, EPA developed an innovative approach, working with the state, military and developed to accelerate transfer of property so the reuse/redevelopment of land could occur concurrent with cleanups. When I began working as the Assistant Director in Superfund many of the remaining parcels were running into conflicts over the more complex technical decisions and project staff were challenged in managing complex sets of relationships. Transfer of thousands of acres of prime real estate, and hundreds of millions of dollars in cleanup was potentially going to be delayed.

- I initiated a series of discussions, first working with our EPA project managers and section chiefs, I coached them on conflict resolution and then meeting with entire project teams including the military and the developer instructed them in approaches for rapidly resolving issues
- Responding to the collapse of the market for "cleanup insurance", an important component of previous agreements, I inspired the team to come up with a "financial assurance" mechanism which would serve in lieu of insurance.
- I guided the state in resolving internal state conflicts around establishing cleanup levels for radiological contamination
- Achieved accelerated transfer, cleanup and reuse of 1,000 acres with no reduction in the quality of the cleanup.

## **RESULTS DRIVEN**

California is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest oil producing State and has had increased production over the last decade. Pumping oil out of the ground generates significant amounts of poor quality water that is commonly referred to as "produced water". Produced water has high dissolved solids and low levels of hydrocarbons which make it unusable for use without treatment. Produced water is typically managed by re-injecting it into the oil producing formation or into subsurface formations which are naturally of very poor quality and are not usable for drinking water. The State must obtain an Aquifer Exemption from EPA prior to permitting injection where water would meet criteria for being a source of drinking water.

As Assistant Director in the Water Division for Region 9, I oversee State implementation of Underground Injection Control (UIC) Programs. When I joined the Water Division, my new team had identified instances where CA had permitted injection into aquifers which did not have the EPA required exemption. I took the following actions:

- I lead an initial round of meetings where we made clear to CA the need to further investigate the number wells which were operating without an aquifer exemption, they subsequently notified us that the problem was extensive and could involve up to 5,000 wells.
- I motivated CA to look for supply wells which could be impacted by injection which resulted in the immediate closure of over 16 injection wells.
- I lead efforts to work with CA to come up with a plan for returning to compliance and presented the plan to industry, congressional representatives and senior EPA HQ officials.
- Once we approved the CA plan, I was directly responsible for leading our team in holding CA accountable and working through the complex decision making needed to approve the nearly 40 aquifer exemption packages to bring the State back into compliance.
- Based on direction from my team, the State has now implemented internal controls, data system upgrades, improved staffing and initiated comprehensive revised rules which reflect new industry protective practices.
- Overall my leadership contributed to the immediate result of greatly improving the future protection of groundwater in CA, robust responses to GAO and OIG inquiries, and a 2015 National Honor Award for our Region 9 Team.

## **BUSINESS ACUMEN**

The U.S. has an estimated \$274 billion in need to support drinking water infrastructure for continued compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The SDWA provides funding to States to maintain drinking water infrastructure financing programs which provide low interest loans and other support to regulated drinking water systems. It is EPA's responsibility to compel States to effectively use funds and maintain low amounts of unused funds also known as unliquidated obligations (ULO's).

With a ULO balance of \$100 million, Hawaii had a significant ULO problem in their drinking water loan fund. As the Assistant Director for the Water Division in EPA Region 9, I lead our internal team of staff and management, as well as staff and management at the State of Hawaii Department of Health (HDOH), to reduce Hawaii's drinking water loan fund ULO's.

- Utilizing my knowledge of both subject areas, I facilitated agreement between engineering and finance staff at HDOH on a plan to return to compliance base upon a detailed study with recommendations for improvement conducted by our contractor.
- I negotiated metrics for performance which would be used to determine when the HDOH would return to compliance and directly briefed the newly appointed Chief of Staff for the new Governor on the targets.
- Worked closely with EPA staff to guide HDOH system improvements to the loans tracking system and new financial modeling tool



- Lead efforts to resolve issues that extended beyond HDOH by meeting directly with leadership of other Departments resulting in elimination of inefficiencies in budgeting and accounting procedures
- I accelerated hiring of staff to support new activities, including meeting with the State legislature to secure approval of the new positions.
- Withheld grant funding in 2015 due to a missed financial target and renegotiated a revised target which returned HDOH to the track to meet the overall programs goal
- The State had reduced ULO's by \$30 million to date and no longer has the second highest ULO percentage in the US, the EPA Region 9 Team received a 2015 National Honor Award for Financial Stewardship

## **BUILDING COALITIONS**

The Gold King Mine release in the summer 2015 required immediate and longer-term collaboration regarding water quality in the San Juan River between 3 Regional offices (8, 6 and 9) with 2 States (New Mexico and Utah) and Tribes (Mountain Ute and the Navajo Nation). As the Acting Director for the Water Division during the summer of 2015, I played a critical role with Senior Leadership including the Regional Administrators and Assistant Administrators during the immediate response.

- I directed the coordination of sampling efforts with Navajo EPA, including rapid negotiation with Senior Navajo officials of water monitoring activities EPA would fund Navajo EPA to perform.
- Appointed as the Senior Region 9 official in high level multi-jurisdictional negotiations.
- Leveraged my Superfund experience and my skill, I volunteered to lead efforts to improve collaboration and coordination across the jurisdiction of the San Juan River.
- Spearheaded planning and implementation of a multi-jurisdictional workshop in November of 2016, resulting in increased cooperation amongst the jurisdictions despite significant barriers to building coalitions arising from ongoing litigation and negative public campaigning. Results of the effort include improved sharing of data and analysis, greater efficiencies in sampling efforts and exploration of a multijurisdictional effort for sharing information about the San Juan River with the public.
- Further results included greater accountability in use of Federal Funds and an improved level of scientific data to drive decision making towards improved protection of human health and the environment.

## **OTHER PROFESSIONAL POSITIONS HELD**

Superfund Remedial Project Manager, GS – 13 Superfund Division, US EPA Region 9, San Francisco	1989-1995
Special Assistant for the Deputy Assistant Administrator US EPA Office of Administration and Resources Management, Washington DC	1988-1989
Program Analyst Office of the Comptroller, US EPA Office of Administration and Resources Management, Washington DC	1986-1988

**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS/HONORS/AWARDS:**

- 2015 US EPA National Honor Award for Financial Stewardship – Hawaii Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Corrective Action Team
- 2015 US EPA National Honor Award for Outstanding Leadership in Collaborative Problem-Solving – California UIC Team
- 2015 US EPA, Office of Enforcement Compliance and Compliance Assurance Bronze Medal for Commendable Service for the Moffett Naval Air Station Federal Facility Agreement
- 2012 US EPA National Team Award for Exemplary Leadership in Equal Employee Opportunity – Disabled candidate recruitment and hiring Team
- 2006 Gold Medal for Exceptional Service, Indian Bend Wash Superfund Site
- 2003 Silver Medal for Superior Service, Palos Verdes Shelf Site
- 2001 Certificate of Commendation for Leadership in the Montrose settlement, US Department of Justice
- 2001 OSWER National Notable Achievement Award – Enforcement Team of the Year, Montrose Enforcement Team
- Founding Co-Chair of the National Association of Remedial Project Managers

**EDUCATION AND SPECIALIZED TRAINING**

- Bachelor of Arts, Political Science
- Continuing Education coursework in Environmental Chemistry, Hazardous Waste Treatment Technologies, Hydrogeology, Hazardous Waste Site Characterization and Landfill Cover Design.